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Policies Respecting Germany

Mike Mansfield 1903-2001

POLICIES RESPECTING GERMANY

Mr. MANSFIELD. Mr. President, I, too, wish to speak on the German question. I am sorry that I did not complete the preparation of my speech in time to give copies to my colleagues, to the Official Reporters, or to the press.

I am grateful to the Senator from Connecticut for showing me and others of his colleagues—if not all of them—the courtesy of sending to us copies of the magnificent speech which he has just completed. I commend him most highly, because I think he has made a real contribution to the public understanding of this most important problem. I believe that in emphasizing the difficulties which will face our country and the free world on or before May 27, he has rendered a service which should be appreciated by all.

He minced no words in his speech. I shall mince no words in mine. As a U.S. Senator from the State of Montana, like the U.S. Senator from the State of Connecticut or any other State, I have a duty and a responsibility to call my shots as I see them, to let the cards fall where they may.

So with this apology to my colleagues, the Official Reporters of Debates, and the press for not having a prepared copy of my speech, and with my public commendation and congratulations to the distinguished Senator from Connecticut for making an excellent speech and laying it on the line. I wish to say thanks because he has rendered a public service. I hope other Senators, in addition to the Senator from Connecticut and the Senator from New York, will likewise take the floor and try to let the people of this country and the world know just what the American position is, and to emphasize that, regardless of any differences as to how we shall achieve our objective, there are no differences so far as our desire and our determination to remain in West Berlin are concerned.

Some days ago, I discussed in the Senate the coming crisis in Germany. Other Members have since contributed to the discussion of this critical matter. That is all to the good. I am persuaded that out of this turmoil of thought will come a firm and positive policy, a policy which, even if it does not yield a rapid resolution of the German situation, will at least unite and steel the Nation for the dangerous days which lie ahead.

THE PROSPECTS IN GERMANY

Let there be no mistake about what does lie ahead. This is no diplomatic lark on which the world is about to embark at Berlin. This is no child's play of blind man's buff.

When I addressed the Senate on February 12, Mr. President, I made a deletion from my remarks just a few moments before I delivered them. I did so because I did not wish to be unduly alarmist. Now the same thought has been expressed by the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom. It has been recognized by Members of this body such as the distinguished Senator from Kentucky [Mr. COOPER] and increasingly by the press. It is at least beginning to sink home that the world is entering into a situation in Germany in which the lives of tens of millions of people—Americans included—may well balance on the avoidance of a single significant error.

The British Prime Minister warned, the other day, of a suicidal war by "miscalculation." As the distinguished Senator from Kentucky [Mr. MORTON], a former Assistant Secretary of State, has said this afternoon, the British Prime Minister also used the word "muddling."

I can say now with greater assurance what I intended to say but deleted from my remarks on February 12: "I express to the Senate my belief that just ahead lies a period which may well see the Nation and the rest of the world miss a devastating war by a very narrow margin. Indeed, it is a period which may see us in war, limited war or unlimited war, war by accident or war by design, war by childish stubbornness or bravado."

THE RESPONSIBILITY OF SENATORS IN THE IMPENDING CRISIS

If that is the case, Mr. President, what are the Members of this body to do? Are they to guard their silence when conscience compels them to speak? Are they to ignore their responsibilities to their States and our country as they see those responsibilities? Are they to accept as all-pervasive the undoubted wisdom of the President and the executive branch of the Government? Or are they to think for themselves and speak for themselves?

Are they to be more concerned with how words will sound abroad, and so hold their peace? Or must they, even more, seek to dispel any uncertainties of the people of the Nation as to the course which this Government is pursuing, and to seek to do so by examining the issues which underlie that course? Are they to wait until they hear what the Department of State has to say on the matter and then parrot agreement? Are they to wait to hear what Mr. Khrushchev has to say, so that they may be sure that what they subsequently say will be in disagreement?

I do not know what others may contend in this matter. I can speak only for myself. For myself, Mr. President, I can say only that when conscience compels me to speak, I owe it to the people of my State and our country to speak out. For myself, Mr. President, I hold that the most important matter is not how people abroad may interpret my words. Important as that may be, it is more important that the people of my State and our country understand fully what is at stake in this situation.

More important is the need of the people of the United States to be satisfied that the course to which they are committed by their Government is a sound one. If they are to be asked to give their lives, as well they may be, then the course of this Government must represent the outgrowth of policies which reflect the deepest needs of the people of the United States. They must be policies which are, in fact, the best that can be devised by this Government to safeguard the Nation and freedom, and to do so, if possible, in peace.

Mr. President, to those who say we may upset people abroad by our discussions, I can only reply that we do not fool anyone abroad if we fool ourselves at home. The unity of the slogan may well be no unity at all. It may well be merely the facade of unity; the Communist, the totalitarian concept of unity.

The unity of free man needs to rest on firmer ground. For the grim days which lie ahead in Germany, this Nation needs the unity which can come only from an understanding of where we stand, where it is we are headed, and why. To stand fast in Germany, as indeed we must, we need to think carefully, to think deeply, and we need to do it now. We need to speak out seriously, soberly, and we need to do it now. The time to examine policies is before, not after, their consequences are upon us. I emphasize that point—before, not after—as in Korea a few years ago.

POSITION ON MR. DULLES

Mr. President, I yield to no one in my appreciation of the enormous burdens of the Secretary of State and his Department, charged, as they are, with primary responsibility, under the President, for the Nation's policies. I believe the record of my position in this matter is very clear. I regard Mr. Dulles, as I have since I have known him, as an able and a dedicated civil servant. I have endorsed many of the policies which have been pursued since he took office. I have worked with him closely, very closely, on several of these matters. I have never felt, however, that this constrained upon me a silence when I disagreed; nor, I am sure, did he. I favor the continuance of Mr. Dulles in office now, not out of any sentimentality, but because I believe that if his health permits, Mr. Dulles is capable of making an extremely significant contribution to the security of the Nation and to the search for peace, particularly at this time.

I do not believe in the concept of the indispensable man. However, I do believe that there are times when a man may become virtually indispensable. Because of what Mr. Dulles has done over the past several months, especially during the past several weeks, in going to Western Europe and discussing the Berlin and German matters with our allies,

and because of his great capacity, his great knowledge, his great ability, and the leadership which he has displayed, insofar as the Berlin and German situations are concerned, he is in a very large sense indispensable.

I hope that any conferences covering these two questions—because they are interrelated—will be held in Washington, where we can make use of Mr. Dulles' capacities and abilities, to advise and lead the West.

In the last analysis, whether his health will permit him to make that contribution is for the President, the Secretary, and his doctors to decide, as the President so cogently pointed out in his press conference of February 25, 1959.

Let me emphasize, however, that because Mr. Dulles is ill is no reason for declaring a moratorium on a frank and full discussion of the Nation's policies in the light of the critical situation in Germany. If I know Mr. Dulles at all, he would be the first to recognize the need for this discussion to continue. He would be the first to denounce any ghoulish political profiteering on his illnes in order to silence this discussion.

There are those who have expressed confusion as to how I can support Mr. Dulles' continuance in office and still criticize some of the policies executed under his name. I can only say that it is not the first time, and I hope it is not the last. We shall have reached a very low point, indeed, in the practice of free and responsible government when a Senator has no choice but to agree 100 percent with a Secretary of State or to hang him in effigy.

I intended to go on as I have in this matter. I shall endorse the foreign policies of this administration when I believe they are sound policies. I shall try to contribute constructively to their reshaping when I believe that they are not—I repeat the word "constructively," because I have always tried to operate constructively. That is a position, Mr. President, which I have maintained since I entered this body, and also during the 10 year prior thereto when I served as a member of the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives. It is the position I propose to maintain so long as I am in the Senate. I shall maintain it regardless of the party which is responsible for the administration of the Nation's affairs.

ATTITUDE ON MR. KHRUSHCHEV

Further, I propose to say what I have to say when I have to say it, irrespective of Mr. Khrushchev's threats or blandishments. It is, to me, a matter of indifference whether Mr. Khrushchev agrees or disagrees with me. I hope this Government, Mr. President, will never, out of a timorous feeling that Mr. Khrushchev may disapprove, fail to stand for what it must stand for. Equally, Mr. President, I hope that this Government will never fail to act as it must act out of an even more timorous feeling that Mr. Khrushchev may approve. What I said on this point on February 12 I believe bears repeating. I said then, and I say again today:

If we are to be prepared to face this crisis in Germany, it will be best not to become distracted or obsessed by the twists and turns of Soviet behavior. The fundamental question of policy for us is not so much what the Russians are looking for in Germany. We know what they are looking for and they may very well seize it while we amuse or fascinate ourselves by trying to interpret the charades of Russian behavior.

No, Mr. President, it is more important to us, far more important, to know what we ourselves are seeking in Germany. We must bring to this crisis not only courage, but also conviction. We must bring to it a positive and understandable policy which meets our essential national needs and the essential needs of freedom, and, if possible, meets them in peace.

It was that thought, Mr. President, which prompted me to list nine points for exploration in a search for a positive policy on Germany last February 12. Some of these points were then, or at least have since become, a part of the present official policy of the United States. Others are not a part of that policy. They represent what, to me, seem rational approaches to various aspects of the problem of Germany. In great measure, they are not original except in their restatement, as my inserts in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD of February 16, 1959, will show. But for their restatement in the context of the speech, I wish to make it clear that I claim full responsibility.

RECAPITULATION OF THE NINE POINTS

Mr. President, I should now like to review the nine points and to discuss their status in official policy at the present time, as well as certain of the comments which have been made upon them. On February 12 I said:

I can be wrong, and I stand ready to accept a better illumination of the problem through discussion and debate in the Senate.

I say that again. I may add, however, that little which has since transpired or has since been said prompts me to modify these points in any significant degree.

Point 1: There must be no retreat of the forces of freedom at Berlin. Mr. President, I said that, not once, but at least six times during the course of my remarks on Eebruary 12. Weeks before that date, I had publicly endorsed a draft Senate resolution which would have upheld the position of the administration to stand fast. That, I may add, is the only resolution on the German situation which I have endorsed so far.

So far as I know, there has not been any significant difference among Democrats and Republicans, or between the Senate and the excutive branch of the Government, on the need to stand fast at Berlin. Certainly there never has been on my part.

Point 2: The German leaders of the two Berlin communities should be urged to begin serious efforts to unify the public services and municipal government of that city. I know, Mr. President, that there are those who will say this approach is illusory and unrealistic; that the East Germans cannot be expected to agree even on a common sewage system, let alone on a common municipal government. I would point out in reply, however, that if Berlin does not have a common sewage system, it does have a common subway system. If the German leader of East and West Berlin can agree on that, as they have, is it beyond the realm of the possible that they may agree on other common public services, particularly if they mean to have peace; or that they may reach a series of agreements which might ultimately lead to a single municipal government for the city? I must ask: What stands in the way of an initiative of this kind? What will be lost by trying to bring about this progress toward municipal unity in Berlin? If we mean to have peace, I believe the effort should be made. It should be made not only to ease the danger of war at this most critical point in Germany; it should be made, too, because if it is successful, out of the microcosm of Berlin could emerge patterns of unification for all of Germany.

Berlin, of course, is an aspect of the whole problem of German unification but it is also the most pressing and compelling aspect. It is at Berlin and along the routes of access to that city that the danger of conflict is greatest. In that sense it requires the most immediate attention, even if solution to its problem of unification may be merely by means of interim solutions, pending the outcome of the whole problem of German unification. So far as I know, Mr. President, at present we are doing nothing, in an official sense, to bring about an attempt at municipal unity in Berlin.

Point 3: The conciliatory services of the United Nations and, particularly, of its Secretary General, should be enlisted, to try to develop an all-Berlin government. If such a government does emerge in the municipality, then a United Nations emergency force should replace both Communist and Allied forces in maintaing free access to the city from all directions, pending a general settlement of the German problem.

So far as I know, Mr. President, no official steps have been taken in this direction. There are hints, Mr. President, that if trouble does develop at Berlin, then the matter will be taken to the United Nations. I would deem it a welcome change, Mr. President, for once to bring the United Nations into an international puzzle before, not after, the pieces have been hopelessly scattered.

Those in the Senate who saw fit to comment on many parts of my last statement generally refrained from comment on this point. I am not prepared to conclude, however, that in Germany at this time there is no possible constructive role for the United Nations and the Secretary General. I believe that there is something to be said for an attempt to bring the United Nations into the situation, now, in the role of fire-prevention, not merely later, in the role of firefighting. For my part I would much prefer to see the whole city of Berlin neutralized on an interim basis, under United Nations auspices, if that can be obtained, rather than to have East German agents of the Soviet Union stamping the permits of western allied transports to West Berlin. We can not know whether such an arrangement can be obtained until we try to obtain it.

And even if we cannot, what shall we have sacrificed by trying?

Points 4 and 5: Unless a unified, neutralized Berlin under United Nations' auspices is established as an interim measure, then Western forces must remain in Berlin, regardless of whether the Russians leave. It is time to think seriously, however, of replacing as rapidly as possible the thousands of non-German allied military personnel in Berline with West German militia.

Here, again, Mr. President, I find in present policy nothing comparable to this suggestion. Present policy, says, in effect, that the Russians must stay in Berlin—in spirit, if not in body. Apart from the fact that I see no practicable way to make them stay in either body or spirit if they wish to go, I am most reluctant to go along with a policy that seeks to require the Russians to stay anywhere westward, if they propose to take even a few steps backward—eastward.

I am fully aware that their going may complicate our remaining in Berlin. We shall be face to face, then, with East Germans. They will be Communists, to be sure—but, nevertheless, Germans, not Russians. The Allied forces may well be compelled, in the last analysis, to face them, if we mean to stay in Berlin at all costs.

It was an awareness of this probability, Mr. President, which prompted me to suggest that it is time to think seriously of replacing the thousands of allied military personnel in West Berlin with West German militia. If there is to be a loss of life among East Germans, in order to preserve what is, in the last analysis, a West German position even more than an allied position in Berlin, then it seems to me best that the allied forces move as quickly as possible to the reserve, even as the Russians intend to do on the other side. This is not a matter of "passing the buck." It is a matter of recognizing that among Germans, as among others, blood may well prove thicker than ideologies.

It will be a tragedy if men must die in this situation in any event. It will hurt the cause of freedom in Germany even more, however, if the Germans who may lose their lives in a limited conflict for access to Berlin lose them by the action of foreign forces.

I know, Mr. President, that there are grave risks in using West German forces in this fashion. Once injected into the situation at Berlin, it is difficult to foresee the contingencies which may subsequently arise. That is why I said it is time to think seriously of using them, not that it is time to use them. The risks must be weighed in the light of all the information and estimates available to the Executive. They must be weighed against the countless risks of trying to preserve, with Allied forces, a status quo in a situation which will change, inevitably, once the Russians have left Berlin. There may be sound reasons for not taking this course of substituting West Germans for the Allied forces at West Berlin. There are no sound reasons, however, for not exploring fully its implications within our own Government and with Allied governments, or for failing to do so promptly.

Point 6: There must be a great deal of talk between Germans who are in authority in the Federal Republic and Germans who purport to be in authority in the Eastern zone.

This is the point, Mr. President, of which much has been made in comments on my remarks of February 12. It seems to me that a monumental issue has been generated here, although, in fact, no substantial issue exists.

The administration—the Western allies—have proposed talks with the Russians, at which each side might have German observers. In other words, East Germans and West Germans are both to be admitted to these talks on Germany, if the Russians accept the Western proposal.

Now, Mr. President, does anyone believe that in talks on the German problem, these Germans—East and West Germans—are going to do nothing but observe? No, Mr. President; they are obviously going to talk, the West Germans through the allied nations, the East Germans through the Soviet Union. If there is a difference between official policy and what I suggested in this respect, it is certainly a minor one. If I may draw an analogy, perhaps I can make the difference clear. I suggested, in effect, that the Germans—East and West—go off into another room and try to come up with concrete proposals on the problem of German unification, which they would then lay before the allied powers and the Soviet Union, for approval and for guarantee.

Many of those who have commented on this proposal have said in effect: "No. That is a dangerous procedure." They have said—those who endorse present official policy on this point—that the West Germans must whisper in the ear of the allies what they think should be done about unification and the East Germans must whisper in the ear of the Soviet Union. Then, the Western allies and the Soviet Union will add their own thoughts and try, out of the conglomeration, to reach an agreement.

Mr. President, either way is agreeable to me. Out of my own limited experience at international conferences, however, I have my own views as to which way is likely to offer greater prospect for success. Those who now conduct foreign policy have theirs. I am more than willing to try their way if they believe it will work. I have a feeling, however, that before we are done with this matter of whispering in ears and the friction of no contact between the Germans, we shall be more than willing to try others.

Point 7: All-German elections may not be essential to peace and to freedom, but there must be some opportunity for the people of East Germany, as there is in West Germany, to express their political preferences and to participate in political affairs without terror. Unless there is, the search for peace can lead to the jeopardizing of freedom.

Here again, Mr. President, I do not believe there is a basic difference between the present policies of this Government and the view which I stated. The Secretary of State made clear, long before my speech of February 12, that all-German elections need not be essential as a first step in German unification. I do not know at what stage they would become essential, nor, with all due respect, do I believe anyone else does at this time.

The Secretary has recognized that reality, and I applaud his recognition of it. I say further, however, that unless the hand of political terror begins to lift in East Germany there is a danger to freedom in any form of unification which may be tried. While this point has not been explicitly stated by the Secretary, I am sure that those who are responsible for the conduct of foreign policy are not unaware of it.

Point 8: The Western allies and the Soviet Union must guarantee for a period of time the unified Germany which may emerge from discussions among the Germans. They must see to it that Germany is neither subjected to military pressures from its neighbors nor becomes a source of military pressures to its neighbors.

Again, Mr. President, there is no disagreement on this obvious point. It has long been a part of the policy of this Government to recognize that a peace treaty for Germany, which provides for the reasonable security needs of its neighbors, including the Soviet Union, is an essential of peace. One may differ with the way this objective has been pursued, but there are few differences as to its essentiality.

Point 9: It is essential that our policy, NATO's policies, do not exclude a careful consideration—may I repeat that word, "consideration"—of the Rapacki plan, the Eden plan for a demilitarized zone in middle Europe, or similar proposals in connection with the unification of Germany, predicated—may I repeat that word, "predicated"—or contingent upon the outcome of the conferences on surprise attack, and suspension of nuclear tests now going on in Geneva.

The Western Powers have indicated an interest in negotiating a European security pact. We are now seeking an agreement, at Geneva, on the problem of nuclear testing and the prevention of surprise attack.

Further, I am given to understand that it is the policy of this Government to recognize that agreement is possible to exclude missile bases from all German soil. Similarly, that it is possible to thin out foreign forces in West Germany in return for a thinning out of Soviet forces in East Germany.

If that is the case, Mr. President, there is no basic incompatibility between the essentials that I listed and what official policy is prepared—I repeat that word, "prepared"—to do. The objective is the same. I reserve the right, however, to examine subsequently the way we are going about trying to reach it.

SIMILARITIES BETWEEN OFFICIAL POLICY AND NINE POINTS

The differences between what we are doing, as a matter of official policy, and what I suggested as the essentials of a

positive Western policy on Germany, are not numerous. In official policy—without a shadow of a doubt on the part of anyone, either Democrat or Republican—we are committed to stand fast at Berlin. We are committed to the participation of Germans of both zones in the discussion of the problems of German unity. We are committed to explore ways other than all-German elections, at least as a beginning of the solution to the problem of German unity. We are prepared to consider proposals which seek to limit certain types of weapons and the alien military forces in both parts of Germany within the framework of all-European security arrangements. With these essentials, Mr. President, I expressed substantial agreement in my remarks of February 12, although I may differ in particulars with respect to the way they are being presently pursued.

DIFFERENCES WITH OFFICIAL POLICY

The basic points at which I diverge from what is present official policy, I believe, are these:

First. Official policy, in effect, says that the Russians cannot leave Berlin or the routes of access to the city from the West; certainly, that they cannot leave in spirit and, perhaps, not even in body. For my part, I would have no particular desire to see them stay, in body or in spirit, even if they could be persuaded from going, which I doubt.

Second. Official policy does not seek actively to try to bring about a unification of the municipal services and government of the two Berlins at the present time. I believe that effort should be made.

Third. Official policy does not seek to enlist the United Nations in the Berlin crisis at this time. For my part, I believe it is high time that this be done; particularly, that the conciliatory services of the Secretary General be sought.

Fourth. Official policy gives no evidence of considering replacing the thousands of Allied forces in Berlin with West Germans. If we are not going to move or cannot move in the direction of trying to bring about the unity and interim neutralization of all Berlin through U.N. conciliation, then, I believe, for the reasons I have already stated, we must give serious consideration to making this replacement.

CONCLUDING COMMENTS

Finally, Mr. President, I must bring to the attention of the Senate the testimony of General Maxwell D. Taylor, the Chief of Staff of the Army before the Senate Disarmament Subcommittee on February 2, testimony which was released only last weekend. The General said, in effect, that there must be total mobilization of this Nation if we are to resist force in Berlin. I must ask: What is being done to bring about this total mobilization, or are we to assume that it will not be necessary?

I hope deeply, Mr. President, that force will not be brought into play at Berlin but there is no certain promise in present circumstances that it will not be. I reiterate my belief that if there is to be a chance to avoid its use, "a Western initiative for peace is essential."

The points which I raised in my remarks on February 12 were designed to indicate a possible direction for that initiative.

Of equal importance with the desire for peace, Mr. President, is the energy and forbearance with which this Government pursues this great need and desire of mankind. Of greatest importance is a national leadership which acts positively for peace.

If the President leads in that fashion, he will find the people of this Nation and the people of the free world will be solidly behind him.

Mr. FULBRIGHT. Mr. President, will the Senator yield?

Mr. MANSFIELD. I yield.

Mr. FULBRIGHT. I should like to take this opportunity to express my appreciation, and I know the appreciation of the Senate, for the very fine job the Senator from Montana has done in bringing this question before this body and the country, and in developing it in such a logical and effective way, as he did today and as he did on the previous occasion. I regret very much that illness prevented me from being here on the occasion of the previous speech on this subject by the Senator from Montana. The Senator has already inspired a great deal of very fruitful discussion of this issue, and I think the country and the Senate will benefit immeasurably from the efforts of the Senator from Montana. I wish to join all the other Senators who have complimented the Senator from Montana for his efforts, which have contributed so much to better understanding of this problem.

Mr. MANSFIELD. I thank the distinguished chairman of the Committee on Foreign Relations. I recall to the Senator's memory that we came to the Congress together in 1943, and since that time we have had a fairly close relationship in the foreign policy field. Of course I am indebted to the Senator from Arkansas, the chairman of the Committee on Foreign Relations, for his kind words, for his unfailing understanding, and for his tolerance and strength over the years gone by.

Mr. President, I now wish to turn to another subject.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Montana has the floor.